

§ 3715.2 What activities do I have to be engaged in to allow me to occupy the public lands?

In order to occupy the public lands under the mining laws for more than 14 calendar days in any 90-day period within a 25-mile radius of the initially occupied site, you must be engaged in certain activities. Those activities that are the reason for your occupancy must:

- (a) Be reasonably incident;
- (b) Constitute substantially regular work;
- (c) Be reasonably calculated to lead to the extraction and beneficiation of minerals;
- (d) Involve observable on-the-ground activity that BLM may verify under § 3715.7; and
- (e) Use appropriate equipment that is presently operable, subject to the need for reasonable assembly, maintenance, repair or fabrication of replacement parts.

§ 3715.2–1 What additional characteristic(s) must my occupancy have?

In addition to the requirements specified in § 3715.2, your occupancy must involve one or more of the following:

- (a) Protecting exposed, concentrated or otherwise accessible valuable minerals from theft or loss;
- (b) Protecting from theft or loss appropriate, operable equipment which is regularly used, is not readily portable, and cannot be protected by means other than occupancy;
- (c) Protecting the public from appropriate, operable equipment which is regularly used, is not readily portable, and if left unattended, creates a hazard to public safety;

(d) Protecting the public from surface uses, workings, or improvements which, if left unattended, create a hazard to public safety; or

(e) Being located in an area so isolated or lacking in physical access as to require the mining claimant, operator, or workers to remain on site in order to work a full shift of a usual and customary length. A full shift is ordinarily 8 hours and does not include travel time to the site from a community or area in which housing may be obtained.

§ 3715.2–2 How do I justify occupancy by a caretaker or watchman?

If you assert the need for a watchman or caretaker to occupy the public lands to protect valuable or hazardous property, equipment, or workings, you must show that the need for the occupancy is both reasonably incident and continual. You must show that a watchman or caretaker is required to be present either whenever the operation is not active or whenever you or your workers are not present on the site.

§ 3715.2–3 Under what circumstances will BLM allow me to temporarily occupy a site for more than 14 days?

BLM may allow temporary occupancy at a single site to extend beyond the 14-day period described in § 3715.1 if you need to secure the site beyond 14 days through the use of a watchman as allowed by § 3715.2–2, and you have begun consultation with BLM under § 3715.3. If BLM decides not to concur in the occupancy, the temporary occupancy must stop.

§ 3715.3 Must I consult with BLM before occupancy?

Before beginning occupancy, you must consult with BLM about the requirements of this subpart. See Table 2 in this section.

TABLE 2

Consultation requirements	
If you are proposing a use that would involve occupancy.	Then.
Under a plan of operations or a modification submitted under 43 CFR part 3800, subpart 3802 or subpart 3809.	You must include in the proposed plan of operations the materials required by § 3715.3–2 describing any proposed occupancy for BLM review concurrently with review of the plan of operation.

TABLE 2—Continued

Consultation requirements	
Under the notice provisions of 43 CFR part 3800, subpart 3809.	BLM will determine whether you have complied with the requirements of this subpart together with its decision approving or modifying the plan. You must submit the materials required by § 3715.3–2 together with the materials submitted under 43 CFR 3809.1–3 for BLM review concurrently with its review of the proposed activity. Any activities in the notice that do not involve occupancy and are reasonably incident may proceed in accordance with 43 CFR part 3800, subpart 3809.
And is a “casual use” under 43 CFR 3809.1–2 or does not require a plan of operations under 43 CFR 3802.1–2 and 3809.1–4 or a notice under 43 CFR 3809.1–3.	You are subject to the consultation provisions of this subpart and must submit the materials required by § 3715.3–2 to BLM. Any casual use activities that do not involve occupancy and are reasonably incident may proceed in accordance with 43 CFR part 3800, subpart 3809.
Or enclosures, fences, gates, or signs intended to exclude the general public.	You are subject to the consultation provisions of this subpart and must submit the materials required by § 3715.3–2 to BLM.

§ 3715.3–1 At what point may I begin occupancy?

You must not begin occupancy until—

(a) You have complied with either 43 CFR part 3800, subpart 3802 or 3809 and this subpart, and BLM has completed its review and made the required determinations under the applicable subparts, and

(b) You have obtained all federal, state and local mining, reclamation, and waste disposal permits, approvals, or other authorizations for the particular use or occupancy as required under this subpart.

§ 3715.3–2 What information must I provide to BLM about my proposed occupancy?

You must give BLM a detailed map that identifies the site and the placement of the items specified in paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) of this section, and a written description of the proposed occupancy that describes in detail:

(a) How the proposed occupancy is reasonably incident;

(b) How the proposed occupancy meets the conditions specified in § 3715.2 and § 3715.2–1;

(c) Where you will place temporary or permanent structures for occupancy;

(d) The location of and reason you need enclosures, fences, gates, and signs intended to exclude the general public;

(e) The location of reasonable public passage or access routes through or around the area to adjacent public lands; and

(f) The estimated period of use of the structures, enclosures, fences, gates, and signs, as well as the schedule for removal and reclamation when operations end.

§ 3715.3–3 How does BLM process the information I submit about my proposed occupancy?

BLM will review all proposed occupancies and all proposed enclosures, fences, gates, or signs intended to exclude the general public to determine if your proposed occupancy or use will conform to the provisions of §§ 3715.2, 3715.2–1 and 3715.5. BLM will complete its review of a proposed occupancy not involving a plan of operations within 30 business days of receipt of the materials, unless it concludes that the determination cannot be made until:

(a) 30 business days after it prepares necessary environmental documents, and

(b) 30 business days after it has complied with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and/or other applicable statutes, if applicable.

§ 3715.3–4 How will BLM notify me of the outcome of its review process?

At the conclusion of the review, BLM will make a written determination of concurrence or non-concurrence, and